

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus for sanitizing articles includes a conveyor for conveying articles through the apparatus, and an irradiation chamber surrounding the conveyor. A plurality of UV lamps is arranged in the irradiation chamber to irradiate with UV light articles conveyed through the irradiation chamber on the conveyor. The intensity and dose of UV light may be varied to achieve a desired level of sanitization. A method of sanitizing articles for re-use includes checking articles for cleanliness, and washing only articles which are discovered to be below a predetermined standard of cleanliness. Articles which are discovered to be above a predetermined standard of cleanliness are irradiated with UV light in order to sanitize such articles without washing. Articles which are below the predetermine standard of cleanliness may be washed in a traditional wash system prior to being irradiated with UV light.